

From the Herald and Presbyter.

The Kindling of Church Love.

It ought not to be forgotten that Church-membership imposes obligation. The Master says: "Go work to day in my vineyard." He places one, two, five or ten talents in the hand of every one, and says: "Occupy; employ this until I come." The range of activity is so wide that every one can find something to do, and it is wonderful how the doing of something elicits interest and kindles Church love. When people are not active in Church work they are easily disappointed, irritated, or turn from their Christian profession.

A minister was seated in his study one Saturday afternoon finishing his sermon for Sunday, when a caller came in, a man who was an irregular attendant at the Church services, and said: "Pastor, I have come to ask you to take my name off the Church book. I don't want to belong to the Church any more. It seems to me our Church is such a cold place, and I don't know many of the members, and for other reasons I want to be out of the Church."

The minister replied: "I am very busy to-day and have not time to talk the matter over with you, but before you leave your Church I want to ask a favor from you. I must leave the city on Monday morning and will not return for two weeks. There is a poor family over on H. Street which I am very anxious about, and I want to know whether you will be kind enough to look after them during my absence."

The man said: "I never did such a thing, but if it will be any accommodation to you, Pastor, I will try and look them up."

Monday afternoon he climbed up three flights of stairs, on H. Street, and upon knocking at the door he heard a faint voice say: "Come in." He walked in upon the bare floor and found two occupants, the one a little girl with hollow, famished cheeks and red eyes, and the other the child's mother, lying on a poorly furnished bed, lurching up with fever. The little one said that she had not been able to get a bite of food for three days. The man stood in the middle of the room an instant, turned quickly, went to the nearest grocery, filled a basket with provisions and delicacies, sent it at once to the room he had left, and then sent for a physician. He repeated his visits daily, and one day was moved to tears as he overheard the little girl say: "Mamma, this good man that God sent is just like the Saviour, for you told me that Jesus healed the sick and fed them when they were hungry."

The moment the man heard of his pastor's return he went directly to his house, and meeting him in the doorway, said: "Pastor, I do not want my name off the Church books, and I want you to forgive me forever asking you to take it off, even as I believe God has forgiven me. These two weeks have been the happiest of my life. And I do not believe you will know the congregation, the people have changed so greatly doing your absence. They have all gotten so kind and so cordial, and it seems to me that we have now the best Church in the world."

Appalling Depths of Space.

In a recent lecture, Sir Robert Ball said that a telegraphic message would go seven times round the earth in a second, and if a telegraphic message could be sent to the moon, it would reach its destination in a little more than a second. It would take something like eight minutes to arrive at the sun; but how long, think you, would it take to get to Alpha Centauri, travelling thither 130,000 miles a second? Seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months would not be long enough; it would take no less than three years, travelling all the time at that tremendous pace, before it would reach its destination. If that is the case with respect to the nearest of the stars, what must be said of those which are farther off? There are stars so remote that if the news of the victory of Wellington at Waterloo had been flashed to them in 1815 on that celestial telegraph system, it would not have reached them yet, even if the message had sped at the speed indicated, and had been travelling all the time. There are stars so remote that if, when William the Conqueror landed in England in 1066, the news of his conquest had been dispatched to them, and if the signals flew over the wire at a pace that would carry them seven times round the earth in a single second, of time, that news would not have reached them yet. Nay, more, if the glad tidings of that first Christmas in Bethlehem, nineteen centuries ago, had thus been disseminated through the universe, there are yet stars of which astronomers could tell us, plunged into space in depths so appalling that even the 1894 years which have elapsed since that event would not have been long enough for the news to reach them, though it traveled 180,000 miles in every second.

"The chief evil of war, as Dr. Channing has said, 'is not that man is slain, but that he is slain, spoiled, crushed, by the cruelty, the injustice, the treachery, the murderous hand of man. The chief evil of war is the concentration of all human crimes. Under its standard gather violence, rage, fraud, rapacity, perfidy, and lust. It is only a few men it would do little. It turns man into a beast of prey.' He rightly adds that 'a more fearful hell in any region of the universe, than a battlefield, cannot well be conceived. There the fiends hold their revels.' This is no exaggerated language, for a great admirer of General Skobeleff described him after battle, when rage was still in his face and the smoke and dust still on his person, as a demon rather than a man. The heart shudders to think of the storms of passion which rage over a field of battle where men mow each other down like grass."

If we want to know what clouds of affliction mean and what they are sent for, we must not flee away from them in flight, with closed eyes and bandaged eyes. Fleeing from the cloud is fleeing from the divine love that is behind the cloud. In one of the German picture galleries is a painting called "Cloudland"; it hangs at the end of a long gallery, and at first sight it looks like a huge, repulsive, dark cloud of gloom, without form or comeliness. As you walk towards it, the picture begins to take shape. It proves to be a mass of exquisite little cherub faces, like those at the canvas in Raphael's "Madonna San Sisto."

If you come close to the picture, you see an innumerable company of little angels and cherubim. How often the soul that is frightened by trials sees nothing but a confused and repulsive mass of broken expectations and crushed hopes! But if that soul, instead of fleeing away into unbelief and despair, would only draw up near to God, it would soon discover that the cloud was full of angels of mercy.—Rev. T. L. Cuyler, D. D.

A Prayer for Peace.

How long, O Lord, shall men with clash of arms their wills contend, the fight set free? When shall the cruel cry of war's alarm, No longer mock a suffering world and Thee?

Enduring unto Death.

Rightly improved, our losses and trials help us to see, which, is even better than being helped to do. It used to be thought that the coral insect was a patient worker, and that the islands reared by him from the ocean depths into the sunlight were the result of his untiring toil; but modern science has shown that it is the endurance, rather than the industry, of coral insects, which uplifts these islands. It is the gradual hardening of the coral; and it is his life built in on the lives of those who were before him that goes to form the basis of the gardens of tropical bloom and fruitage, when the upper air shall have been reached by the successive generations of those who live and endure and die at their sea-swept posts. So it may be with us, in our slow hardening of character, and our slow dying unto self, at some post of duty, way under the surface far out of the world's sight,—our endurance may do more than our best work could do, and our progress may be greater while we wait, than it could be if we moved forward.

"We climb like coral, grave by grave, But pave a path that's sunward."

And by and by, when those who come after us have entered into the reward of our enduring, they shall speak gratefully of what we were, even though the world knows nothing of what we did; and it may be they will, in consequence, be the readier to comfort themselves to Him who was a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered, and was made "complete through sufferings."—Sunday School Times.

Working for a Soul.

Not for souls. But for a soul. Only one. Not at a time. Not by wholesale, but individually. Not indefinite souls in Africa or New Zealand, but one soul in your own family, in your circle, in your community. Work for a soul. Dr. Cuyler tells us of a warm-hearted lawyer in his Church, who made up his mind to work for the conversion of a certain infidel in the congregation. He went to work deliberately. He was patient and persistent. He did not lack faith or wisdom, he was kind and gentle. His yearning after the soul of his friend brought a rare degree of Christ-likeness to his own life. After awhile the infidel said to him in a half jest, "Mr. J., you would better give me up as a hard case, and try somebody else." But the soul-hungry lawyer did not give up his friend. He gave himself all the more to his self-appointed work, and he did not cease his praying and working until his friend was soundly converted to God.

Oh, worker in the cause of the unsaved, pick out your one soul; then devote yourself wholly to your task. Do not be diverted from your royal purpose. Let that one soul be constantly in your thoughts, in your prayers, in your plans. And it may be that, sooner than you think for God will grant you your heart's desire. One soul. Not a score. Only one. Pray for one. Live for one.—The Epworth Herald.

Dangers of Electric Wires.

A New York letter says: "In cities where crowds of people must walk under countless electric wires whenever they step into the street, electrocution is daily adding to the list of its victims and turning out new jobs for cornermen and undertakers. In the week ending last Saturday nobody was killed by the wires in St. Louis; but a youth in Brooklyn was killed by taking hold of an iron railing that had been charged from a live wire not properly insulated; a policeman at Pittsburgh was killed while picking up a supposedly dead wire lying in the street; a man in some New Jersey town leaned against the iron pole supporting electric wires, and was shocked to death; and in Philadelphia a lineman, while riding along the street on a repair wagon, fell dead, an iron rod he had hold of having touched a live wire in passing. It is going to destroy a great many lives before this practice of spreading a network of deadly wires over every community is stopped."

No wonder Dr. Wayland Hoyt was moved to exclaim: "If young people only knew the value of their youth!" He says: "A half hour each day steadily given to the vanquishing of some real books in history, science, and literature, is three hours a week, is more than twice as much as the average of twelve solid days of twenty-four hours each year. What cannot the busiest man accomplish by such seizures of fragments of time? O if the young people only knew the culture possible for them by such simple means! And for evermore it is the man who knows who gets to be the human who does, and to whom the chance for doing comes. Merely frittering newspaper and novel reading—a youth should only devote to that—how pitifully sad! No ship drifts into harbor. No young person drifts into an achieving manhood or womanhood."

SENATOR WILSON'S COURAGE.—After Henry Wilson's first election to the United States Senate, he gave his friends a dinner. The table was set with not one wineglass upon it.

"Where are the wine glasses?" asked several of the guests merrily.

"Gentlemen," said Mr. Wilson, "you know my friendship for you and my obligations to you. Great as they are, they are not great enough to make me forget 'the rock whence I was dug.' Some of you know how the course of intemperance overshadowed my youth. That night scene, I feel even now my early surroundings. For what I am, I am indebted, under God, to my adherence to it. Call for what you want to eat, and if this hotel can provide it, it shall be forthcoming; but wines and liquors cannot come to this table with my consent, because I will not spread in the path of another the snare from which I escaped."

Three rousing cheers showed the brave senator that men admire the man who has the courage of his convictions.

The English Sparrow.

The English sparrow domesticated here finds a defender in Mr. L. M. Pray before the American Naturalists' Society, who says that it is not the evil-minded, litigious, greedy or pugnacious bird which it has been asserted to be, but a useful, diligent and peaceful totality of a creature, worth twice its weight in cuckoos or chickadees, and of inestimable service in consuming noxious varieties of tree-destroying worms and insects which other birds won't touch. If this is true Mr. Pray ought to be sent as a missionary to those communities which decree the extermination of the sparrow and offer bounties for its destruction.—Boston Transcript.

Leaving Self Out.

Self ought to be left out of our service for Jesus Christ. Indeed, it must be. We cannot serve Christ and have self uppermost in plan and effort. If self is served, then Christ is not. If Christ is served, then self must take a back seat. The Christian life is an unselfish life. The more we learn of Christ, and the more we become like Him, the more will we leave considerations of self out of our aspirations and work.

It is said that a young man who had attended a summer meeting of Christian workers not long ago, went away saying: "I will leave a great deal of myself at this camp." He had received such exalted views of Christ and what a life consecrated to Him meant while at the meetings in the grove that he came to think less of himself and more of Christ. So he was going to leave self behind and put Christ in the forefront of his future life.

A rich spiritual blessing will lift many a Christian then to a higher view of the Christian life. Happy would it be for all Christians if they would learn to leave out self in the camp meetings and revivals, when they take their spiritual grounds, and return to their work filled with the Holy Spirit.—Religious Telescope.

A Good WIFE.—A good wife is to a man, wisdom, strength, and courage; a bad one is confusion, weakness, and despair. No condition is hopeless to a man where the wife possesses firmness, decision, and economy. There is no outward propriety which can counteract indolence, extravagance, and folly at home. No spirit can long endure bad influence. Man is strong, but his heart is not adamant. He needs a tranquil mind, and especially if he is an intelligent man with a whole head, he needs its moral force in the conflict of life. To recover his composure, home must be a place of peace and comfort. There his soul renews its strength and goes forth with renewed vigor to encounter the labor and trouble of life. But if at home he finds no rest, and is there met with bad temper, jealousy, and gloom, or assailed with complaints and censures, hope vanishes, and he sinks into despair.

(National Presbyterian)

A class of persons who profess to love the Bible excuse their neglect of it by saying that they have no time for Bible reading. But is there any person in this land that cannot command the time to read a chapter from the Scriptures every day? It may be doubted whether there is such a person. There are many who cannot do this and at the same time do all that they desire to do in other directions. But that is not a reason for neglecting the Bible. Our Bible reading should be one of the first duties of every day. A good rule is to read nothing else until we have read a portion of Scripture. If we adopt this rule and rigidly adhere to it, we shall never lack the time to read at least a few verses from the Bible. This can be done at home and it can be done abroad; it can be done on a journey. The man of the world can read his newspaper on the car; if we are as much interested in the Bible as he is in the daily news, we shall be able to read a chapter on a railroad train. And if it is always in mind, we shall find no day too short to read a lesson from the Scriptures.

(Kentucky Baptist)

The time will never come when it will not be immensely important to memorize Scripture. This is one of the neglected parental duties of the times, and Sunday-school teachers can do their pupils no greater service than to induce them to commit as much Scripture as possible. But some one may say, it is harmful to induce children to memorize Scripture they do not understand, it is a mere mechanical task, and will create a distaste for the word of God. We are sure this is a mistaken notion. While the child may not understand the Scripture at the time it is committed, still it stores away a mine of treasure, and there is magic about memory, for after awhile those passages will begin to yield a meaning, and these progressive discoveries of sweet blessings in words formerly meaningless will awaken the very liveliest desire for the word of God.

(Congregationalist)

A prevailing prayer is one which is so founded in penitence and faith as to illustrate one's desire to be right in his own spirit before God. It is one which, no matter what its form or its aim, subordinates the human will to the divine, always tempering its utmost intensity with the prayer, "Yet not My will, but Thine, be done." It recognizes the superiority of God's knowledge and the rightfulness of His rule over us. It understands the fact that a prayer may be answered best by seeming to deny it. It is the cry of a trusting child to a loving father for a favor, not a clamorous suitor for some just but as yet ungranted right.

(S. S. Times)

Once a friend, always a friend. Most of us are ready to apply this truth to one who claims to be our friend; but we are not so ready to apply it to ourselves as a test of our friendship. If we claim to be a true friend to another, our friendship-love ought not to pivot on his fidelity, but on ours. Even though he fails us, we ought not to fall him or fall ourselves. If we were ever his friend, we shall ever be his friend. Nothing that he does or fails to do, ought to cause us to be untrue.

(A. R. Presbyterian)

It is wise to follow the Apostle's advice to be swift to hear and slow to speak. It is easy to say things that we regret after calm thought. Not many but are in danger of expressing themselves too hastily at times. We often say things which afterwards we wish had never been said at all or said with more calmness and moderation. The remedy for this is slowness to speak, calm thought before rather than after speaking. It is not always wise to say just what we believe nor as positively as we believe.

(N. Y. Advocate)

The best sermons are not those which make the hearers smile or weep, but which make truth real and effective. Anecdotes and illustrations are good in moderation, but the only effective and abiding thoughts is that which impresses the thoughts of God upon minds and hearts. Truth abides and is immortal, and the power of the Gospel is the power of divine thought, which finds its highest expression in Him who is spoken of as "the Word," and who "dwelt among us."

Havana, Cuba.—A terrible storm prevails throughout the length and breadth of the island of Cuba. It began last evening, and continued with undiminished fury through the night, and there are no signs of its abatement. Great damage has been done to property, many houses having been blown down, trees uprooted and fences and outbuildings carried away. So far, however, no loss of life has been reported.

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